

Overview and Scrutiny
Child Sexual Exploitation & Safeguarding

Presentation by

Louise Elo, Head of Early Intervention & Support

Rachel Austen, Intervention & Prevention Officer

Date

2/8/2016, 6pm



What is sexual exploitation?

- Sexual exploitation of children and young people **under 18**.
- Involves **exploitative situations, contexts** and **relationships** where young people (or a third person or persons) **receive something** (e.g. food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, cigarettes, affection, gifts , money) as a result of them performing and/or another/others performing them sexual activities.
- Can occur through the **use of technology** without the child/young person's immediate recognition e.g. being persuaded to post sexual images in the internet/mobile phone without immediate payment/gain.
- In all cases those exploiting children/young people have **power over them** by virtue of their age, gender, intellect, physical strength and/or economic or other resources.
- **Violence, coercion and intimidations** are common, involvement in exploitative relationships are characterised in the main, by the child/young person's **limited availability of choice** resulting from their social/economic and or emotional vulnerability.

Prevalence of CSE

- South Yorkshire: 173 inquiries ongoing with 104 people prosecuted, charged or summonsed between January 2013 and March 2014.
- West Yorkshire Police: 65 CSE investigations underway, 3 of which involve gangs
- Lancashire Police 1,248 CSE referrals between April 2013 and March 2014
- London Metropolitan Police: 1,248 referrals between April 2013 and March 2014
- Statistics depend on recognition, disclosure, reporting , categorisation and prosecution.
- Many cases are not identified or recorded as CSE so these figures represent the `tip of the iceberg.'

(Source: Jenny Pearce, 2015, SAFEANDSOUNDGROUP.ORG.UK)

The Process of Identification

- CSE is a relatively new area of research and therefore the statistics about prevalence change constantly. A lot of statistics come from reports, charges and convictions.
- The stages at which a CSE incident is recognised are below:-

The child realises they are being exploited

The child discloses to somebody

That person understands CSE and knows how to pass the information on

The authority or the police force correctly categorise the concern as CSE

The case appears in statistics for that area.

Learning from case reviews

- Published since 2010 where children were victims of either serious or prolonged sexual exploitation AND/OR murder or suicide following sexual exploitation was not recognised prior to death.
- Sexual exploitation can **be difficult for professionals to recognise and respond to**
- **Confusion** around young people's rights and their capacity to consent to sexual activity means both young people and professionals often wrongly view exploitative relationships as consensual
- Therefore, sexual exploitation often goes **unidentified**, and young people can be reluctant to engage with services.
- Learning from recent case reviews highlights that professionals need to be aware of the **warning signs and vulnerabilities** of children and young people whom they suspect are being sexual exploited.
- Professionals must consider the **child protection implications of underage sexual activity**.
- Professionals need to **persevere to engage** with young people and make sure that services provided are on-going and child-centred.
- The focus of approaches to tackling child sexual exploitation should be on **ensuring young people's safety, protection and wellbeing** rather than managing their challenging or risk taking behaviour.

Source: <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/child-protection-system/case-reviews/learning/child-sexual-exploitation/> Nov 2013

Case studies

- Short discussion on vulnerabilities from two real life case studies.
- Real voices: child sexual exploitation in Greater Manchester.
- <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/fighting-for-childhood/news-opinion/real-voices-child-sexual-exploitation-greater-manchester>

Learning for improved practice

- **Identifying and assessing child sexual exploitation:** warning signs (early intervention), child protection implications of underage sexual activity, carry out early and comprehensive assessment, establish a complete picture through assessments from different agencies, assess the young person's capacity to consent.
- **Making interventions:** balancing a young person's rights with the need to protect; engaging young people with services; consider the wider context of young people's risk taking behaviour; provide ongoing support.
- **Identifying and dealing with perpetrators:** take disclosures seriously; identify perpetrators and prevent child sexual exploitation from continuing; collect profiles of victims to help identify ways to reduce future exploitation.

(Source: <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/child-protection-system/case-reviews/learning/child-sexual-exploitation/>)

Legislation

- Sexual offences make it clear what constitutes a sexual offence against a child and states what is an appropriate sentence.
- **Sexual Offences Act 2003.**
- The NSPCC's [Flaw in the Law](#) campaign successfully amended the **Serious Crime Bill** so that it is now a criminal offence for an adult to send a sexual message to a child. **The Serious Crime Act** which received royal assent on 3rd March 2015 amends section 15 of the Sexual Offences Act 2003.
- Closing this gap means that **perpetrators will be discouraged from grooming** children on-line for sexual exploitation and the police will be able to take action against offenders earlier on in the grooming process.
- **Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014.**
- Section 116 of this act 'Protection from sexual harm and violence' allows police to require hotels and similar establishments, in which they reasonably believe child sexual exploitation is taking place, to provide information about guests. This is intended to equip the police to better investigate sexual offences committed on these types of premises.
- Section 113 amends the Sexual Offences Act 2003 to create **Sexual Harm Prevention Orders (SHPOs) and Sexual Risk Orders (SROs)**. An SHPO or SRO is intended to protect the public or an individual against sexual harm.

(Source:<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/child-abuse-and-neglect/child-sexual-exploitation/legislation-policy-guidance/>)

Feedback & Closure

Child Sexual Exploitation is child abuse

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility

The biggest risk factors are AGE & OPPORTUNITY

Opportunities to work together – elected members and community are part of the solution.

Role of early intervention & preventative agencies to work together in supporting children and young people who have suffered and helping to identify vulnerabilities.

Contacts:

Louise Elo
Head of Early Intervention & Support
Chorley Council
E-mail: louise.elo@chorley.gov.uk

Mobile: 07985 511481
Tel: 01257 515732
Call centre: 01257 515151

Rachel Austen
Intervention & Prevention Officer
Chorley Council
E-mail: rachel.austen@chorley.gov.uk

Tel: 01257 515334